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PSC 504.01: Organizational Theory

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Political Science 504
ORGANIZATION THEORY
Spring 1999

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Office Hours: Anytime I'm not in class

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This seminar provides a comprehensive overview of organization theory, particularly as it relates to managerial effectiveness. It requires extensive reading of the "classics" in the field as well as selections from the more recent literature.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. To increase conceptual and theoretical knowledge.
2. To develop analytical and problem-solving skills.
3. To improve writing skills.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Shafritz and Ott (eds.), Classics of Organization Theory, (Wadsworth, 1996).
Tom Peters and Nancy Austin, A Passion for Excellence, (Warner Books, 1985).
Selected articles in Readings Packet.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Student Participation: Students are required to read all reading assignments and be prepared to discuss them in class.
2. Analytical Memos (25% of grade each): Students are required to write three, 3-4 page analytical memos. Grades will be reduced by a half of a letter grade for each day an assignment is late, unless special arrangements are made in advance.
3. Final Exam (25% of grade): Students are required to write an in-class final exam. The exam questions are provided on this syllabus. Four questions will be drawn at random and students will write on three of them.

READING ASSIGNMENTS

- February 3 Organization Theory and Management Practice
Shafritz and Ott, "Introduction," pp. 1-9.
H. Mintzberg, "The Five Basic Parts of the Organization," in Shafritz and Ott, pp. 232-244.

- February 10 Directing, Controlling, and Motivating Employees
John Campbell et al., "Expectancy Theory," in readings packet.
Daniel Katz and Robert Kahn, "The Psychological Basis of Organizational Effectiveness," in readings packet.

Exam Question #1: Describe the four motivational strategies identified by Katz and Kahn and the behavioral consequences that might be expected to follow from each. Which would you adopt as a manager and why?

- February 17 Weber's Model of Bureaucracy
Max Weber, "Bureaucracy," in Shafritz and Ott, pp. 80-85.
Elliott Jaques, "In Praise of Hierarchy," in Shafritz and Ott, pp. 245-253.

Exam Question #2: Bureaucracy can be understood as a structural mechanism for directing and controlling employees. Describe four key elements of Weber's model of bureaucracy, and explain how each of these (according to Weber), contribute to administrative efficiency. Finally, discuss how knowledge of Weber's model may constrain your ability to organize the workplace and motivate employees.

- February 24 Understanding Public Bureaucracy
James Q. Wilson, Bureaucracy, Chapters 1 and 2. (Class Hand-out).
Osborne and Gaebler, "Reinventing Government: Introduction," in Shafritz and Ott, pp. 523-537.

Analytical Memo #1: Due Monday, March 1

- March 3 Scientific Management Theory
Adam Smith, "Of the Division of Labour," in Shafritz and Ott, pp. 40-45.
Henry R. Towne, "The Engineer as an Economist," in Shafritz and Ott, pp. 48-51.
Frederick Taylor, "The Principles of Scientific Management," in Shafritz and Ott, pp. 66-79.

Exam Question #3: Frederick Taylor is best known for his scientific method for getting the maximum output from a worker for a minimum input of energies and resources. Describe the steps involved in this method and his implicit theories about how to a) direct, b) control, and c) motivate employees. Finally, offer your own assessment of scientific management as a means of improving organizational performance.

March 10 Administrative Management Theory
Daniel C. McCallum, "Superintendent's Report," in Shafritz and Ott, 46-47.
Henri Fayol, "General Principles of Management," in Shafritz and Ott, 52-65.
Luther Gulick, "Notes on the Theory of Organization," in Shafritz and Ott, 86-95.

March 24 Human Relations Theory
Mary Parker Follett, "The Giving of Orders," in Shafritz and Ott, pp. 156-162.
Fritz Roethlisberger, "The Hawthorne Experiments," in readings packet.

Exam Question #4: Explain in some detail what Follett meant by "observing the law of the situation." Explain how Follett's work anticipated ideas associated with later schools of thought, including human relations, human resources, and TQM.

Exam Question #5: Summarize the conclusions drawn from the Hawthorne Experiments and the assumptions and methods of human relations theory derived from them. Which of these methods, if any, will you incorporate into your approach to management, and why?

March 31 Human Resources Theory
A. H. Maslow, "A Theory of Human Motivation," in Shaf. & Ott, pp. 163-175.
Douglas McGregor, "The Human Side of Enterprise," in Shafritz and Ott, pp. 176-182.
Frederick Herzberg, "One More Time: How Do You Motivate Employees?," in readings packet.

Exam Question #6: Describe the "motivational theory" behind a) job enrichment and b) participative management. Generally speaking, what distinguishes human relations theory from human resources theory? As a manager, will you use an approach based on self-motivation alone or Herzberg's two-factor approach? Why?

Analytical Memo #2: Due Friday, April 16

April 7 Systems Theory and Contingency Theory
Katz and Kahn, "Organizations and the Systems Concept," in Shafritz and Ott, 274-286.
James D. Thompson, "Organizations in Action," in Shafritz and Ott, pp. 287-301.
Kast and Rosensweig, "General Systems Theory," Shafritz and Ott, pp. 310-313
only (as discussion pertains to contingency theory).
P. Senge, "The Fifth Discipline: A Shift of Mind," in Shafritz and Ott, pp. 513-522.

Exam Question #7: Organizations can be viewed as rational machines for achieving specific goals or as natural systems seeking to survive in a hostile environment. What are the differences between these two views, and which view or combination of views provides the most realistic understanding of organizations? What is the value of systems theory to managers?

April 14 **No class. Work on Analytical Memo (due Friday)**

April 21 The Organizational Culture and Symbolic Management School
Edgar Schein, "Defining Organizational Culture," in Shafritz and Ott, pp. 430-441.
Peters and Waterman, "In Search of Excellence," in Shafritz and Ott, pp. 508-512.
Peters and Austin, "Bone-Deep Beliefs," Chapter 13 of Passion for Excellence.
William Ouchi, "The Z Organization," in Shafritz and Ott, pp. 494-507.

Exam Question #8: Part of the solution to the "human problem" lies in maximizing employee commitment to organizational goals. Knowing that organizations may have unique cultures, comprised of unique values and symbols, holds what implications for employee motivation and organizational performance?

April 28 Leadership Theory
Tom Peters and Nancy Austin, A Passion for Excellence, pp. 309-464.

Exam Question #9: Write an essay distinguishing a good leader from a good manager. Place your discussion in the context of achieving organizational excellence.

May 5 Total Quality Management
"TQM's Core Concepts," in readings packet.
"The Origins of TQM," in readings packet.
J.M. Juran, "How to Think About Quality," from Juran on Leadership for Quality,
in readings packet.
James E. Swiss, "Adapting TQM to Government," in readings packet.
Joseph Sensenbrenner, "Quality Comes to City Hall," in readings packet.

Exam Question #10: Write an essay describing TQM as a theory of organizational excellence and relating it to other management theories we have studied. Offer some tips about how to implement it successfully in the public sector.

Analytical Memo #3 - Due Monday, May 10

May 12 **Final Exam** (Same time but perhaps a different classroom)

WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

Tips for Writing Analytical Memos

1. These are a form of technical writing in which the student seeks to pack as much analysis as possible into relatively few pages. They require a delicate balance between succinctness on the one hand and depth of analysis on the other.

2. Keep the grading criteria clearly in mind. Be sure, for example, that your introductory paragraph establishes the purpose of the memo and introduces the theory around which the analysis will be organized. Don't begin writing until you have crystallized a theory.
3. **These assignments require you to develop your own synthesis and to express it in the form of a theory.** As examples, "Organizational effectiveness in the public sector is a product of X, Y, and Z;" Motivation is a product of A, B, and C."
4. Make specific references to the readings so that the professor can tell that you have read and understood them. (Footnotes are not needed). Example: "Frederick Taylor believed, for example, that"
5. Avoid bullets; write in complete sentences. Avoid linear analysis, i.e., avoid "the first step is . . . the second step is . . ."
6. Avoid bald assertions; back statements up with examples or academic references.

The following assignments ask you to extract the main points from the readings and to organize a discussion of them around your own theory. They are to be 3-5 pages, typed, and double-spaced.

Memo #1 Due March 1

A Theory of Organizational Effectiveness

Your newly appointed agency director is from the private sector. Concerned about his ability to manage a public agency effectively, he asks you to write an analytical memo outlining a theory of how to create and sustain a highly effective organization. Specifically, he asks you to briefly summarize the constraints he did not have to face in the private sector and to explain your theory of organizational excellence as drawn from the examples of organizational effectiveness provided by Wilson, and Osborne and Gaebler.

Memo #2 Due April 16

A Theory of Employee Motivation

Your immediate superior wants to maximize productivity without sacrificing morale, but she is unsure how to do so. She asks you to investigate what scientific management, human relations, and human resources theory has to offer and to report back regarding your findings. Specifically, she asks you to summarize how to direct, control, and motivate employees from the perspective of each of the three schools **and** develop your own theory of motivation.

Memo #3 Due May 10

A Theory of Organizational Excellence

A new agency head has just come on board. He asks you to write an analytical memo summarizing what he can do to achieve organizational excellence. He sincerely desires a turned on work force and operational effectiveness and is relying on you for the answers. In contrast to Memo #1, this director asks you to draw on the ideas of Peters/Austin and TQM theorists in formulating your theory of organizational excellence.

CRITERIA FOR GRADING ANALYTICAL MEMOS

						<u>weights</u>
Thoroughness of answer	1	2	3	4	5	x6 =
Sophistication of analysis	1	2	3	4	5	x6 =
Organization and logical development	1	2	3	4	5	x5 =
Clarity of expression	1	2	3	4	5	x3 =
Grammar, punctuation, and spelling	See Below					

GUIDES TO UNDERSTANDING THE CRITERIA

1. Thoroughness of Answer

The best memos respond to each question thoroughly and with sufficient detail to demonstrate that the subject is fully understood.

2. Sophistication of Analysis

In the best memos, the author does much more than just explain or describe. He or she shows evidence of having thought about the subject in depth. The subject is analyzed from many angles and assessed critically.

3. Organization and Logical Development

The best memos show evidence of prior planning as if they had been outlined in advance. They have a purpose and/or theme which is introduced in the introduction, developed in the body of the paper, and returned to in the conclusion.

Paragraphs are well constructed and linked to each other in a logical sequence using transitional sentences and subheadings as needed. Arguments, examples, facts, opinions, and details explain the main point and lend credibility to each point being developed.

4. Clarity of Expression

In the best memos, words are chosen carefully and sentences are constructed purposefully so that each point the author makes is expressed as exactly, precisely, and clearly as possible.

5. Grammar, Punctuation, and Spelling

The best memos are characterized by consistently correct grammar, punctuation, and spelling. Verbs agree with subjects. There are no single-sentence paragraphs or sentence fragments.

One point will be subtracted for each single-sentence paragraph, verb-subject disagreement, sentence fragment (incomplete sentence), and run-on sentence.

EXAM QUESTIONS

1. Describe the four motivational strategies identified by Katz and Kahn and the behavioral consequences that might be expected to follow from each. Which would you adopt and why?
2. Bureaucracy can be understood as a structural mechanism for directing and controlling employees. Describe four of the elements of Weber's model of bureaucracy and explain how each of these, according to Weber, contribute to administrative efficiency. Finally, discuss how knowledge of Weber's model may constrain your ability to organize the workplace and motivate employees.
3. Frederick Taylor is best known for his scientific method for getting the maximum output from a worker for a minimum input of energies and resources. Describe the steps involved in this method and his implicit theories about how to a) direct, b) control, and c) motivate employees. Finally, offer your own assessment of scientific management as a means of improving organizational performance.
4. Explain in some detail what Follett meant by "observing the law of the situation." Explain how Follett's work anticipated ideas associated with later schools of thought, including human relations, human resources, and TQM.
5. Summarize the conclusions drawn from the Hawthorne Experiments and the assumptions and methods of human relations theory derived from them. Which of these methods, if any, will you incorporate into your approach to management, and why?
6. Describe the "motivational theory" behind a) job enrichment and b) participative management. Generally speaking, what distinguishes human relations theory from human resources theory? Will you use an approach based on self-motivation alone, or Herzberg's two-factor approach? Why?
7. Organizations can be viewed as rational machines for achieving specific goals or as natural systems seeking to survive in a hostile environment. What are the differences between these two views, and which view or combination of views provides the most realistic understanding of organizations? What is the value of systems theory to managers?
8. Part of the solution to the "human problem" lies in maximizing employee commitment to organizational goals. Knowing that organizations may have unique cultures, comprised of unique values and symbols, holds what implications for employee motivation and organizational performance?
9. Write an essay distinguishing a good leader from a good manager. Place your discussion in the context of achieving organizational excellence.
10. Write an essay describing TQM as a theory of organizational excellence and relating it to other management theories we have studied. Offer some tips about how to implement it successfully in the public sector.